United Nations A/71/740–S/2016/1140

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
6 January 2017

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventy-first session
Agenda items 32 and 37

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Letter dated 30 December 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to convey herewith a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan regarding the latest provocations by the Republic of Armenia on 29 December 2016 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 32 and 37, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

17-00202 (E) 100117

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 30 December 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

30 December 2016

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan expresses deep concern over recent intensification of provocations by Armenia aimed at undermining the negotiations of the Vienna and Saint Petersburg meetings and the efforts on the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by peaceful means and at expanding the scope of the conflict. Herewith, the Ministry states the following:

A reconnaissance-subversive group of Armenian armed forces perpetrated the provocative act by violating the State border between Armenia and Azerbaijan on 29 December. This provocative act by Armenian armed forces was halted and the Armenian reconnaissance-subversive group was forced to retreat with losses. A serviceman of the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan, Chingiz Gurbanov, was killed while preventing the attack and his corpse taken to Armenian side.

Initially, the Armenian side denied that they had the body of the Azerbaijani serviceman. Later, however, the Armenian side, with a view to hiding its responsibility for the incident and misleading the international community, attempted to present the situation as a violation of the State border of Armenia. Contrary to moral and ethical norms and basic human values, the Armenian side resorted to dirty propaganda and disinformation by sharing photos of the killed Azerbaijani serviceman on social networks.

Numerous signs of mutilation after death were also registered on the bodies of Azerbaijani servicemen killed during the April battles that occurred at the provocation and instigation of the Armenian side. Their photos were also shared on media and social networks by Armenia. A couple of years ago, the body of Mubariz Ibrahimov, a serviceman of the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan, was also kept by Armenia. Acts of mutilation were committed on the body, and only after persistent international pressure was his body returned to Azerbaijan a few months later.

Ignoring international humanitarian law, the Republic of Armenia pursues a systematic policy of committing acts of mutilation on the bodies of servicemen killed during combat operations, and in a consistent manner makes the return of bodies the object of political speculation. We stand hopeful that the necessary and urgent measures will be taken by international humanitarian organizations, especially the International Committee of the Red Cross, which are guided by the principles of compassion and humanism, to ensure the return of Chingiz Gurbanov's body to Azerbaijan.

Abusing his authority with regard to the above-mentioned issue, the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, Nikolai Bordyuzha, distorted the essence of the incident and claimed that it happened in the territory of Armenia. Moreover, addressing the illegal regime established in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan as the "nagorno-karabakh republic", he attempted to

question the territorial integrity, sovereignty and internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan. This irresponsible statement by the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization serves to undermine the negotiations on the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict mediated by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group Co-Chair countries and is contrary to the basic principles of the relationship with the other member States of the organization that support the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan. Mr. Bordyuzha has made biased statements on the conflict in the past as well.

Attempts by Armenia to bring the armed conflict directly to the Armenia-Azerbaijan border and to involve the Collective Security Treaty Organization in the conflict by misusing politicians like Mr. Bordyuzha, who have a particular attitude and sympathy towards Armenia, serve to escalate the political situation in the region and pose serious threats to regional stability and security.

We reject the irresponsible statement by Mr. Bordyuzha and expect other member States of the organization to come up with the proper assessment.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has repeatedly stated that the continuation of aggression by Armenia against Azerbaijan and the illegal existence of the Armenian armed forces in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan is the main cause of the escalation and incidents in the conflict zone and the principal impediment to the political settlement of the conflict.

The Republic of Azerbaijan calls upon the international community to press Armenia for peace and demand the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.